

12.420 REPORTING VEHICLE THEFTS AND RELATED OFFENSES

Reference:

Procedure 12.270 - Impounding, Moving, and Release
of Vehicles
Procedure 12.400 - Offense Reporting, Miscellaneous
Reporting
Standards Manual 42.2.1, 82.2.1

Definition:

For report processing and computer entry purposes only, a vehicle is any motor driven conveyance designed to carry its operator. In addition to ordinary motor vehicles, this definition includes most motorized construction and farm equipment (back hoes, harvesters, etc.) and the following:

Aircraft
All terrain vehicles
Automobiles
Bulldozers
Buses
Campers with wheels
Cranes (motorized and self propelled)
Golf carts (motorized)
House vehicles with wheels
Minibikes/Mopeds (bearing serial numbers)
Motor scooters (w/o pedals for human power)
Motorcycles
Motorized boats (bearing serial numbers)
Riding lawn mowers (bearing serial numbers)
Snowmobiles
Trailers
Trucks

Report any motor driven conveyance not listed, or which does not have a serial number, on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.

Purpose:

Proper reporting and processing of all vehicle theft/attempt theft, license plate(s) theft/attempt theft, misplaced vehicle, and lost license plate(s).

Policy:

Officers will not pursue a vehicle wanted for Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle (UUMV), or make a UUMV arrest until there is a signed warrant when there is sufficient suspect information known. Do not enter a vehicle into RCIC when the reporting person refuses to prosecute a known or developed suspect.

Procedure:

- A. Initial Investigation of Vehicle or License Plate(s) Theft.
 - 1. Division personnel receiving a report of a vehicle or license plate(s) theft will first attempt to determine the time and place of occurrence.
 - 2. Police Communications Section (PCS) will broadcast an "unconfirmed" vehicle or license plate(s) theft if:
 - a. The officer believes the theft just occurred, or the suspect or vehicle might still be in the vicinity and:
 - b. The officer has the necessary preliminary information (license plate number, type of vehicle, etc.).
 - 3. The officer will immediately notify and furnish to the PCS Auto Theft Desk the license plate information, type of vehicle, vehicle identification number (VIN).
 - a. PCS will check the repossessed car file and tow sheet and inform the reporting officer of pertinent information. Cancel the broadcast immediately if it is not a stolen vehicle.
 - 4. Confirm vehicle/license plate(s) theft by determining ownership:
 - a. Request to see the vehicle title, vehicle registration, or both.
 - b. If the complainant cannot prove ownership by producing the above document(s), the reporting officer will:

- 1) Initiate a name search of the LEADS Vehicle/License Plate Registration File by Query Registration (QR).
 - 2) Contact the appropriate local deputy registrar for recent vehicle registrations. New registrations may not be in the LEADS Vehicle Registration File. Phone numbers for registrars are in the telephone directory yellow pages under "License Service."
 - 3) Request PCS (CIN-1 operator) send a teletype message to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV), Columbus, Ohio, for a manual search. Do this if the reporting person gives a license plate number, but cannot verify ownership.
 - 4) Have the owner contact their insurance company for VIN and license plate information. Verify information by checking the LEADS files.
5. If successful in confirming ownership, notify PCS who will broadcast and make the computer entry.
- a. When completing the Ohio Uniform Incident Report, check the appropriate Ohio Revised Code (ORC) section number following the title of the report.
6. If the reporting officer cannot confirm ownership of the reported vehicle/license plate(s) after following the steps listed above, make an "Unconfirmed Vehicle/License Plate(s) Theft" on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report. Inform the reporting person.
- a. PCS will teletype and broadcast the report and carry it in an active status for 72 hours. Do not enter the theft information into computer files.

- b. The officer will advise the complainant to exhaust all efforts to locate a document (title, registration, VIN, or license plate information) to prove ownership. Instruct the complainant to contact the police immediately when they locate proof of ownership.
 - c. The reporting officer will forward all copies of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report to the district collator of the district carrying the report. The collator will handle proper assignment and make reports available for roll call dissemination.
 - 1) District collators will not assign offense numbers to "Unconfirmed Vehicle/License Plate(s) Theft" reports.
 - d. It is the responsibility of the investigative supervisor of the district carrying the report to have an investigator contact the complainant. The investigator's follow up will determine the status of the report.
 - e. At the end of the 72 hour period, PCS will cancel the report and teletype unless it receives instructions from the investigating district to upgrade the report and teletype message to a "Stolen Vehicle/License Plate(s)" report.
7. Report attempts to commit a violation of any ORC statute that requires preparation of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report as follows:
- a. Enter the word "Attempt" before the offense title, except in cases of Aggravated Robbery and Robbery.
 - b. Use the same ORC section number as if an actual, completed offense.
 - c. For reporting purposes only, never use the ORC Attempt Section 2932.02 on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.

B. Reporting Vehicle Theft/Attempt Theft:

1. Prepare one original and three copies of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report. Forward them to the district where the offense occurred after review by a supervisor.
 - a. Title offense "Vehicle Theft" and check section number 2913.02V.
 - b. Make corrections or additions to any Ohio Uniform Incident Report on a subsequent Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
2. Handle property contained in, but not part of, a stolen vehicle as follows:
 - a. Consider the spare tire, jack, lug wrench, etc., parts of the vehicle (no Ohio Uniform Incident Report is necessary).
 - 1) List these items and other unidentifiable property in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
 - b. Report on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report:
 - 1) Property that is readily identifiable with a serial or owner applied number, or
 - 2) When the combined value is more than \$300.00.
 - c. Use a Property Supplement if additional items are listed.
 - 1) Use another Ohio Uniform Incident Report to make corrections or additions concerning property listed on a previous Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
3. List in detail any damage to the vehicle or missing vehicle parts in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.

4. Vehicle Value

- a. The district collator will determine vehicle values.
 - 1) Records Unit and PCS will maintain National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) books.
 - 2) List the vehicle value in the appropriate space(s) on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.

5. Vehicles stolen as part of robbery or burglary type offenses.

- a. Complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
- b. The offense title on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report is the robbery or burglary type offense preceded by the word "vehicle." Examples are "Vehicle Aggravated Robbery," "Vehicle Aggravated Burglary," "Vehicle Breaking and Entering," etc.
 - 1) The ORC section number for the Ohio Uniform Incident Report will be for the ORC defined offense (i.e., "Vehicle Aggravated Robbery" 2913.02V).
 - 2) The ORC section number for the Ohio Uniform Incident Report will be for the ORC defined offense (i.e., "Aggravated Burglary" 2911.11).
- c. The Ohio Uniform Incident Report, completed in these instances, will bear a separate offense number. Cross reference the offense numbers on each Ohio Uniform Incident Reports in both "Narrative" sections.

C. Reports of Unauthorized Use of Motor Vehicle (UUMV):

- 1. Title offense "Unauthorized Use of a Vehicle" and check section number 2913.03V.

- a. PCS will not broadcast or enter unauthorized use of motor vehicle reports into the computer system unless there is a warrant number or authorization from a supervisor.
- 2. When sufficient information exists on a suspect to sign a warrant and:
 - a. The complainant will not prosecute, the reporting officer will:
 - 1) Complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report and close it "Prosecution Declined."
 - a) Do not issue a warrant referral.
 - b) Do not telephone the report to PCS.
 - b. The complainant will prosecute, the reporting officer will:
 - 1) Complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
 - a) Officers will issue the complainant a direct warrant referral for UUMV only if there are extenuating circumstances.
 - b) Provide the desk officer with a copy. If the complainant reports the warrant information, police personnel must be able to call the report in to PCS for immediate entry.
 - c) If the offense occurred in a district other than the reporting district, the officer will make the offense report and:
 - 1] Mail original report and fax a copy to the district of occurrence.
 - 2] Make a copy of the report for reporting district desk personnel.

- 3] Instruct the complainant to contact the district responsible for the investigation with the warrant information.
- 3) As soon as practical after 72 hours following the report, a district investigator will determine if the complainant has:
 - a) Signed a warrant, if issued a UUMV warrant referral.
 - 1] If no warrant was signed, close the case "Victim Refused to Cooperate."
 - 2] Upon receiving information that a UUMV warrant has been signed, the officer will confirm the warrant and telephone the report and warrant number to PCS. Mark the Ohio Uniform Incident Report indicating this was done.
- 3. When the complainant does not have sufficient information to sign a warrant and:
 - a. The complainant will not prosecute, the officer:
 - 1) Will complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report and close "Prosecution Declined."
 - 2) Will not telephone the report into PCS.
 - b. The complainant will prosecute, the officer:
 - 1) Will complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
 - a) In "Narrative" section clearly state the complainant will prosecute.
 - b) Will not telephone the report into PCS.

- c) Will forward the report to the district collator who assigns an offense number and forwards it to the district investigative unit.
 - 2) The investigator will attempt to obtain information for a warrant.
 - a) If sufficient information develops for the complainant to sign a warrant, issue a referral.
 - 1] If there is no warrant signed within 72 hours, the investigator will close the case "Victim Refused to Cooperate."
 - a] Do not telephone the report into PCS.
 - 2] If the complainant or officer signs a warrant, telephone the report and warrant number into PCS.
 - b) If the complainant will not sign a warrant, the investigator will close the case "Refused Prosecution."
 - 3) If insufficient information exists to sign a warrant, the district investigative supervisor will determine whether or not to make a computer entry.
- D. Reporting Vehicle Defrauding a Livery or Hostelry and Recovery (Ohio Uniform Incident Report):
 - 1. For hired or rented vehicles not returned to the owner, the dispatched officer will issue a warrant referral to the owner of the vehicle.
 - a. A district officer will complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report only after the complainant signs a warrant.

- 1) Use offense title "Vehicle Defrauding a Livery or Hostelry."
 - 2) Check Section 2913.41V.
 - 3) Call PCS with information for entry.
 2. Vehicle Defrauding a Livery or Hostelry Recovery.
 - a. Title the recovery "Vehicle Defrauding a Livery or Hostelry Recovery." If the defrauding occurred in another jurisdiction, add "OT" as a prefix to the title.
 3. When the property involved is not a vehicle, or when violations of ORC Section 2913.41 occur with the vehicle returned to the owner, refer to Procedure 12.400, Section C.
- E. Reporting Misplaced Vehicles (Ohio Uniform Incident Report):
1. Complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report "Misplaced Vehicle" and forward all copies to the affected district. Title the report "Misplaced Vehicle." Do not use an ORC section number.
 - a. Notify PCS who will broadcast and carry the report in an active status for 72 hours.
 - b. The district investigative supervisor is responsible for assigning follow-up investigation to determine the status of the "Misplaced Vehicle."
 - c. Make one copy for dissemination at roll call.
 2. When locating a "Misplaced Vehicle" within 72 hours, the recovering officer notifies PCS. Cancel the "Misplaced Vehicle" teletype.
- F. Reporting Stolen Vehicle Recovery:
1. Query vehicle through the mobile data terminal (MDT) or district CAD to obtain stolen vehicle information.

2. Identify the location of the originating agency that reported vehicle as stolen.
 - a. For out-of-town recoveries, request PCS to issue a "Hit Request Confirmation" with the originating agency prior to requesting a Signal 38.
 - b. All initial contacts with originating agencies (ORI) go through PCS (CIN-1 operator). Bypassing PCS and contacting the ORI directly causes confusion in entered vehicle status.
 - c. Upon receipt of the PCS teletype notifying the district of an out of state recovery, district desk personnel will promptly notify the assigned investigator or the investigative unit supervisor. The assigned investigator or investigative unit supervisor will ensure that the complainant is notified of the out of state recovery in a timely manner.
3. Stolen vehicle recoveries not released to the owner at the scene of recovery will be impounded. Impounded vehicle recoveries require a Towing Report (Form 369) to be made.
 - a. The yellow copy of Form 369 will be given to the dispatched private wrecker operator.
 - b. Fax Form 369 to Impound Unit as soon as possible. The original white copy of Form 369 will be mailed to Impound Unit using interdepartmental mail.
 - c. The pink copy of Form 369 will be retained at the district.
 - d. Note on the Form 369 if the owner was notified of the recovery.
4. Prepare an Ohio Uniform Incident Report. Telephone the information to PCS.
 - a. The report title will be "Vehicle Recovery." If theft occurred in another jurisdiction, title the report "OT Vehicle Recovery."

- 1) If vehicle parts or contents are still missing, the title will be "Partial Vehicle Recovery" or "Partial OT Vehicle Recovery."
 - 2) Use 2913.02VR on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
- b. To aid the investigator who carries the original vehicle theft report, enter the following in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report:
- 1) List and identify the property recovered in the vehicle and indicate the disposition of such property.
 - 2) List any damage to the vehicle.
 - 3) List any stripped or missing vehicle parts at the time of recovery in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report. The district collator will determine the value of the articles.
- c. When calling PCS to report vehicle recovery information include:
- 1) Name of person/officer who notified the owner.
 - 2) Time and date of the notification.
- d. When not able to make notification, indicate this in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report. List the date and the time you requested notification, the police agency or district, and the name of the officer contacted.
- G. Reporting License Plate(s) Theft/Attempt Theft:
1. The reporting officer will prepare an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
 2. The district carrying the report assigns the offense number.

3. The offense titles are "License Plate(s) Theft" or "Attempt License Plate(s) Theft."
 - a. Check Section 2913.02L in either instance.
4. If only one license plate is missing and evidence of theft is present, prepare an Ohio Uniform Incident Report. Note whether the theft was of the front or rear plate.
5. Report stolen or attempt stolen expired license plate(s) on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
6. Telephone all stolen valid or expired license plate(s) to PCS for entry into the computer files.
7. Report theft/attempt theft of license plate validation stickers on an Ohio Uniform Incident Report using ORC Section 2913.02.
 - a. The value is the original cost of the sticker.
 - b. Include in the description the sticker color and serial number for computer entry into the Property File.
 - c. Query all suspected stolen stickers as "Property."
 - d. The offense title will be "License Plate Validation Sticker Theft" or "Attempt License Plate Validation Sticker Theft," ORC Section 2913.02.
 - e. Upon recovery of a stolen sticker, the officer will prepare a Supplementary Offense Report (Form 311). Note the recovery of the property and direct the data entry operator to delete the sticker from the computer Property File. Do not make a "Recovery" offense report.

H. Reporting Stolen License Plate(s) Recovery:

1. Upon recovery of stolen license plate(s), immediately prepare an Ohio Uniform Incident Report and telephone the information to PCS.

- a. If one license plate is still missing, the recovery is partial. Explain under the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report which plate (front or rear) is still missing.
 - b. The report title is "License Plate(s) Recovery." Title reports of license plates stolen in another jurisdiction "OT License Plate(s) Recovery."
 - c. Check Section 2913.02LR for reporting purposes only.
 - d. When reporting license plate(s) recovery information to PCS, include:
 - 1) Name of person/officer who notified the owner.
 - 2) Time and date of the notification.
 - e. When not able to make notification, indicate this in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report. List date and time you requested notification, the police agency or district, and the name of the officer contacted.
 - f. All initial contacts with the ORI go through PCS (CIN-1 operator). Bypassing PCS and contacting the ORI directly causes confusion in entered license plate status.
- 2. On a vehicle with recovered stolen plate(s), and a vehicle not reported stolen which is to be impounded, complete a Towing Report (Form 369).
 - a. Follow Procedure 12.270, Section C. 5., Held for Evidence/Investigation, for this type of impoundment.
 - 3. Stolen license plate(s) will be removed from the vehicle at time of recovery by recovering officer.

NOTE: Wreckers are required to have tools that will accomplish the removal of license plates from a vehicle.

- a. Process license plate(s) on a Property Receipt (Form 330) to be sent to Court Property Unit.
 - 1) Note under the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report that the license plate(s) were sent to Court Property Unit.
 - 2) Advise owner the license plate(s) can be obtained at the Court Property Unit.

I. Closure of Vehicle/License Plate(s) Theft Offenses:

- 1. In those instances of vehicle and license plate thefts cleared "Refused Prosecution" because the complainant will not prosecute the suspect, and the vehicle is not recovered, cancel the computer entry.
 - a. The investigator responsible for investigating the case will, with the approval of a supervisor, contact PCS to request immediate cancellation of the computer entry.
- 2. Close cases with partial recovery unless recovery includes the vehicle, both license plates (if two issued), all parts of the vehicle, and all property listed on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
- 3. Notify the owner of recovered stolen vehicle/ license plate(s):
 - a. When recovering a vehicle or license plate(s) stolen in Cincinnati, it is the responsibility of the recovering officer to notify the owner or initiate the notification process. Make notification in one of the following ways:
 - 1) By telephone. The officer may contact the police agency where the owner lives for assistance if necessary.
 - 2) By personal visit, if the owner lives or works in the recovering district.

- 3) If the owner lives or works in another district, the recovering district will notify the residence or employing district to make the notification.
 - a) If there is no immediate contact with the owner, the districts involved will make blotter notes to ensure follow up.
- b. If the owner does not live in Cincinnati or within the local telephone rate area, the officer will request PCS (CIN-1 operator) to send a teletype message to the proper police agency requesting them to notify the owner. PCS (CIN-1 operator) will request notification confirmation (via return teletype message) from the agency.
 - 1) The reporting officer will write on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report in the block designated for notify as follows:

CIN-1 Message # _____ sent
(including message number).
 - 2) PCS (CIN-1 operator) will immediately make a computer entry "Located Vehicle" (LV) into the LEADS and NCIC Wanted Vehicle File.
 - 3) Officers will not bypass PCS and make initial contact with the ORI themselves. This causes confusion in entered vehicle status. PCS will make any required initial notification of other agencies.
- c. If the vehicle is not drivable at the time of recovery:
 - 1) Inform the owner the vehicle is not drivable. This allows the owner to obtain the services of a private wrecker.
 - a) Provide the above information to PCS (CIN-1 operator) for inclusion in out-of-town police agency notifies, if applicable.

4. It is the duty of an officer from the recovering district to safeguard the vehicle and all property inside until the vehicle is either released to the owner or impounded.
5. Try to release the vehicle to the owner at the scene if not needed for other reasons and if it can be done within a reasonable time.
 - a. If the owner or agent is unable to be contacted, or refuses to claim the vehicle at the scene, the vehicle will be towed, through a Signal 38 request, to a designated private storage facility for storage and recovery by the owner or agent.
 - 1) Investigations concerning recoveries will be done at the private storage facilities within 24 hours of the recovery.
 - 2) Auto recoveries will no longer be accepted at the Impound Unit or taken to police districts for investigation.
 - b. Indicate in the "Narrative" section of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report whether the recovered vehicle was released to the owner or agent at the scene, or towed.
6. Routing of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report offense reports on Vehicle Theft/Attempt Theft, Vehicle Defrauding a Livery or Hostelry, Vehicle Recovery, License Plate(s) Theft, and License Plate(s) Recovery.
 - a. Original to Records Unit (following coding and computer entry)
 - b. Copy for district files
 - c. Copy for district investigative unit
 - d. If a recovery - copy to district where theft occurred
 - e. Copy to Criminal Investigation Section Auto Squad

J. Reporting Lost License Plate(s); Ohio Uniform Incident Report:

1. The reporting officer will conduct a preliminary investigation to determine if the plate(s) is lost or stolen.
 - a. Absence of both plates would be a strong indication of theft, unless other circumstances are present.
 - b. If the license plate(s) is lost within the City of Cincinnati, initiate a license plate (registration) computer check to verify ownership.
 - c. Contact the Court Property Unit to determine if someone turned in the license plate(s). Contact the district of occurrence if known.
2. Prepare an Ohio Uniform Incident Report in duplicate titled "Property Lost." Include the following:
 - a. Name, address, and telephone number of the owner
 - b. Name of complainant, if other than the owner
 - c. License number, state of issue, and the validation sticker number, if any (if a lost rear license plate)
 - d. Date and place of occurrence, if known
 - e. Indicate if loss was to one (indicate front or back) or both license plates
 - f. Telephone the information to PCS and add the teletype number to the Ohio Uniform Incident Report
3. Advise the complainant of the following information in lost license plate(s) cases:
 - a. If the owner finds the license plate(s), the person should immediately notify the police who can remove the plate from current files.
 - b. The owner should contact the BMV as soon as possible.

c. A deputy registrar handles reissuing of Ohio license plates. The following information may be helpful to the vehicle owner:

- 1) Passenger Vehicle - Take any remaining license plate, the registration, or the vehicle title if registration is lost for a new set of plates. If both license plates are missing, take the registration and the vehicle title in for new plates.
- 2) Commercial Vehicle - Take any remaining license plate with the registration and make application for duplicate plate. Use the issued "W.S." sticker (lost license plate windshield sticker) on the vehicle until the duplicate plate arrives from Columbus. If both plates are missing, bring in the registration and title and make application for a new set of plates.
- 3) The registrar charges an issuance fee for the above services.

K. Reporting Found License Plate(s) Ohio Uniform Incident Report:

NOTE: This section does not apply to recovered stolen license plate(s). Handle as indicated in Section H. of this procedure.

1. Complete an Ohio Uniform Incident Report in triplicate for each instance of found license plate(s). The reporting officer will attempt to determine the owner's name and address and will include this information on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
2. After identifying the owner, the district will attempt owner notification by telephone. Instruct owners to pick up the plate(s) at the district station before 0700 hours the next work day.

- a. If the owner cannot pick up the plate(s) within that period, instruct owner to retrieve the plate(s) from the Court Property Unit.
3. Enter the name of the person notified and the time of notification on the Ohio Uniform Incident Report.
4. If the officer cannot determine the name of the owner after exhausting all investigative means, forward the plate(s) to the Court Property Unit. Attach a copy of the Ohio Uniform Incident Report explaining the methods used to determine owner identification.